trends on air pollution related respiratory symptoms affecting approximately 46 per cent people living in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether many more such studies are proposed to be conducted in other metropolitan cities;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) The interim findings of the studies indicate higher incidence of respiratory symptoms among the residents of Delhi. However, there is no conclusive data available to establish cause-effect relationship between the manifestations of various respiratory ailments and the air pollution.

(c) to (e) Central Pollution Control Board has also sponsored other epidemiological studies *viz.* (i) Effects of environmental pollution on the status of human health of Delhi residents by All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, (ii) Human risk assessment studies in asbestos industries in India by Industrial Toxicology Research Central, Lucknow, (iii) Health status of conservancy staff and other community associated with municipal solid wastes management in Kolkata by Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata, and (iv) Health status of conservancy staff and other community associated with municipal solid wastes management in Chennai by Sri Ramchandra Medical College and Research Institute, Chennai.

Strategy for cleansing/recleansing the rivers

1869. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased state:

(a) whether Government have devised any fresh strategy to cleanse/ recleanse the rivers of the country in the light of the experience gained in this regard from the earlier programmes/projects; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The objective of the National River Conservation Plan is to improve the water quality of the rivers through the implementation of the pollution abatement works like Interception and diversion works, Sewage treatment plants, low cost sanitation works, Electric crematoria and improved wood crematoria, River front development etc. In the light of the experience gained from these programmers, Government has discussed fresh strategies with the State Governments for cleaning rivers in various fora. Among the points deliberated are:

- Urban local bodies/States have the responsibility to create urban infrastructure so as to ensure that untreated sewage is not discharged into rivers and lakes.
- Additional resources may be generated for creation of such urban infrastructure by building into the external developmental costs, the cost of collection of sewage, its conveyance, treatment etc. Wherever new urban centres are developed and such costs should be built into the price of developed land.
- States may also consider exploring other means for raising resources for capital expenditure, such as, surcharge on property tax, stamp duty etc.
- Urban local bodies/State Governments need to further consider innovative ways for raising revenue for meeting the operation and maintenance costs by adopting measures, such as,
  - Levying user charges
  - Sale of sludge
  - Generation of power from bio-gas in sewage treatment plants
  - Creation of facilities for tourism.

Public participation and awareness programmes to generate awareness among the public for keeping water bodies clean, need to be also conducted simultaneously during implementation of pollution abatement schemes.

Basic facilities to forest guards

1870. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is not only acute shortage of forest guards but also lack of basic facilities such as arms, communication equipment, transport, etc. to confront sophisticated armed poacher; and